THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI TUSHARBHAI CHAUDHARY) (a) to (d) The communities notified as Scheduled Tribes under Article 342 of the Constitution may profess any religion. The list of Scheduled Tribes is State/UT specific and any inclusion/exclusion/modification in the list of Scheduled Tribes of any State/UT may be done only after the concerned State Government/UT Administration sends the proposal and is agreed by the Registrar General of India and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes. Further, All communities notified as Scheduled Tribes, irrespective of the religion being professed by their members, are entitled to avail the benefits meant for the Scheduled Tribes.

Complaints regarding ST certificates

3332. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received complaints during 2008-09 regarding people taking advantage of privileges of Scheduled Tribes by producing fake certificates;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government; and

(c) what measures Government intends to take to stop this practice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI TUSHARBHAI CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) During 2008-09 the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has received references for verification of Scheduled Tribe's Certificates from different Ministries/Departments/ Organizations etc. As the Ministry of Tribal Affairs is the nodal Ministry for specification of Scheduled Tribes under Article 342 of the Constitution and the issuance and verification of Caste Certificates rests with the concerned State Governments/UT Administrations, the Ministry has, therefore, referred these cases to the concerned State Governments/UT Administrations for appropriate action.

(c) The Government of India has issued various circulars from time to time for proper issuance and verification of Scheduled Tribe's Certificates. Following the decision of the apex court in the case of Kumari Madhuri Patil and others *Vs*. State of Maharashtra and others, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has again circulated in June, 2004, the instructions of the Supreme Court to streamline the procedure for the issuance of social status certificates, their scrutiny and their approval to all State Government/UT Administrations.

Inclusion of Dhangar community in the list of ST

3333. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Goa Government has proposed to include Dhangar community in the list of Scheduled Tribes;

(b) if so, the status of the proposal; and